

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A rod connector comprising:

a connector main body swingably attached to a shank, said connector main body comprising a recess configured to engage part of a spherical end portion of the shank, part of said spherical end portion extending outside of said recess in a direction towards the shank ~~distal end of a shank portion~~;

a rod supporting portion provided with in the connector main body and configured for supporting a rod; and

a pressure fixing device for pressure fixing the rod to the rod supporting portion of the connector main body.

2. (Currently Amended) A rod connector comprising:

~~a connector main body swingably attached to a distal end of a shank portion;~~

a rod supporting portion ~~provided with the connector main body and~~ configured for supporting a rod, said rod supporting portion comprising a recess for engaging the rod and a recess for engaging a spherical end portion of a shank swingably attached to the rod connector;

a rod pressing member provided with a rod pressing portion opposing to the rod supporting portion, said rod pressing member comprising a recess for engaging the rod and a recess for engaging the spherical end portion of the shank; and

a pressure fixing device for pressure fixing the rod via the rod pressing member of ~~the connector main body,~~

~~wherein the rod connector is provided so as to freely move in a direction moving apart from and close to the rod supporting portion.~~

3. (Currently Amended) The rod connector of claim 1, wherein the rod supporting portion comprises convex portions at both ends of the rod supporting portion, each convex portion comprising a sharp distal end configured to be embedded into the rod a ~~convex portion having a sharp distal end eating into the rod is provided in both end sides of at least one of the rod supporting portion and the rod pressing portion.~~

4. (Currently Amended) The rod connector of claim 1, wherein a supporting surface of the rod supporting portion ~~is formed in~~ comprises a rough surface.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The rod connector of claim 1, wherein ~~a flange portion for come-off prevention is provided in a rear end of the shank portion~~ comprises a flange portion for preventing removal of the shank from an engaging member.

7. (Currently Amended) The rod connector of claim 2, wherein at least one of the rod supporting portion and the rod pressing portion comprises convex portions at both ends of the rod supporting portion or rod pressing portion, each convex portion comprising a sharp distal end configured to be embedded into the rod a ~~convex portion~~

P24194.A06

~~having a sharp distal end eating into the rod is provided in both end sides of at least one of the rod supporting portion and the rod pressing portion.~~

8. (Currently Amended) The rod connector of claim 2, wherein a supporting surface of the rod supporting portion is ~~formed in~~ comprises a rough surface.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) The rod connector of claim 2, wherein a ~~flange portion for come-off prevention is provided in~~ a rear end of the shank ~~portion~~ comprises a flange portion for preventing removal of the shank from an engaging member.